

MFA Neighbor Conference

MEDIA PLAN

March 5, 2007

On March 10 several of the neighboring countries in the Middle East will be gathering to discuss the long term implications of Iraq. There is expected to be a surge of media activity surrounding this day. Here are suggestions to help create a process that is both beneficial to the media as well as the political officials involved in the conference.

Scene-Setters and Collateral Media Activities *Prior to the Conference*

Media Room

A media room at the conference should be established which could facilitate the press needs, such as internet connection for laptop computers, several PC workstations, international phone connections, fax machine with international reach, and translators assigned to the room to help Western reporters with understanding the daily briefings.

Action:

1. MFA PAO and event coordinator: The MFA press representative should work with the event coordinators and IT engineers to set up phones, computers and extra internet connections. Also, televisions should be installed to keep aware of breaking news and updates from other news organizations. (40 workstations should be enough)

Press Conference Stage

In case there are statements given by representatives of the various governments at the end of the conference or during specific breaks during the discussions, a room needs to be set aside to allow the press to gather and ask questions after the conference. The room should have flags, a podium, PA system, simultaneous translation equipment, chairs for the press and for the representatives, easy access for the principals to get into the room and exit it.

Action: Set up room for press conference a day ahead of time, test all electronics, rehearse entrances and exits, provide refreshments for the principals on the day of the conference.

Background information

A press kit should be made ahead of the scheduled event featuring the principals involved in the conference, bios on each, a draft itinerary of events, contact information for public affairs officers, photos and other relevant materials. However, no summaries of discussions or remarks should be included.

Action: MFA Public Affairs Officer

Day of Conference media events

TV at Conference event (All Day)

Two media provided satellite trucks should be positioned at the conference site to be operated throughout the day for journalists to cover live broadcasts from the event. One truck for the use of the Western TV's and the other would be for the Iraqi/Arab TV networks.

Security for these trucks will be difficult. One suggestion would be to set up the trucks the day before the event, secured by the Iraqi police overnight, and allow the engineers to power up the trucks early the morning of the event. Press representatives should be contacted early to allow for them to choose an order of broadcasting, whose satellite truck will be used and to agree on a pool of engineers.

Action: MFA and GOI Press officials

English Translation

TV's and print reporters are going to be depending on translation more than usual on the day of the conference because of the importance of quick reporting that can be expected for the media. It is critical that we recruit the best three translators for that day.

Action: MFA

Press Conference

As stated earlier, a room should be ready for questions and answers from conference participants with translation and adequate audio.

Action: MFA

Teleconference Backgrounder

In the early evening, conference officials should conduct a teleconference briefing with western media (we can expect both Baghdad and US bureaus to participate on this day). This backgrounder should try to offer interpretations of the day's events and explaining how the discussions will be moved forward

Action: PAS, GoI

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